

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1 and 3 and add new claims 6-8 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A liquid crystal panel including a thin film transistor substrate formed with thin film transistors for driving pixel electrodes, a counter substrate provided in a manner opposed to the thin film transistor substrate, and a liquid crystal layer sandwiched between the thin film transistor substrate and the counter substrate,

the liquid crystal panel comprising:

hole-filling columnar layer portions for filling recesses produced by forming the pixel electrodes in contact holes each formed for connecting each of the thin film transistors and an associated one of the pixel electrodes to each other; and

cell gap-maintaining columnar layer portions for maintaining a cell gap between the thin film transistor substrate and the counter ~~substrate~~substrate; and

a protrusion or a slit for controlling orientation of liquid crystal molecules at one of the pixel electrodes of the thin film transistor substrate and the pixel electrodes of the counter substrate.

2. (Currently Amended) A liquid crystal panel including a thin film transistor substrate formed with thin film transistors for driving pixel electrodes, a counter substrate provided in a manner opposed to the thin film transistor substrate, and a liquid crystal layer sandwiched between the thin film transistor substrate and the counter substrate,

the liquid crystal panel comprising:

hole-filling columnar layer portions for filling recesses produced by forming the pixel electrodes in contact holes each formed for connecting each of the thin film transistors and an associated one of the pixel electrodes to each other; and

cell gap-maintaining columnar layer portions for maintaining a cell gap between the thin film transistor substrate and the counter substrate;

~~The liquid crystal panel according to claim 1, wherein the cell gap-maintaining columnar layer portions are formed in a predetermined number of the recesses to fill the predetermined number of the recesses, and maintain the cell gap between the thin film transistor substrate and the counter substrate at respective locations of the predetermined number of the recesses, and wherein the hole-filling columnar layer portions fill ones of the recesses other than the predetermined number of the recesses.~~

3. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a liquid crystal panel including a thin film transistor substrate formed with thin film transistors for driving pixel electrodes, a counter substrate provided in a manner opposed to the thin film transistor substrate, and a liquid crystal layer sandwiched between the thin film transistor substrate and the counter substrate,

the method comprising the step of simultaneously forming hole-filling columnar layer portions for filling recesses produced by forming the pixel electrodes in contact holes each formed for connecting each of the thin film transistors and an associated one of the pixel electrodes to each other, and cell gap-maintaining columnar layer portions for maintaining a cell gap between the thin film transistor substrate and the counter

substrate-substrate; and a protrusion or a slit for controlling orientation of liquid crystal molecules at one of the pixel electrodes of the thin film transistor substrate and the pixel electrodes of the counter substrate.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 3, wherein the step of simultaneously forming hole-filling columnar layer portions for filling recesses produced by forming the pixel electrodes in contact holes each formed for connecting each of the thin film transistors and an associated one of the pixel electrodes to each other, and cell gap-maintaining columnar layer portions for maintaining a cell gap between the thin film transistor substrate and the counter substrate includes exposing a photosensitive resin formed on an entire surface of the thin film transistor substrate to light, to leave behind areas for forming the hole-filling columnar layer portions therein, and areas for forming the cell gap-maintaining columnar layer portions therein, for simultaneous formation of the hole-filling columnar layer portions and the cell gap-maintaining columnar layer portions, which are made of the photosensitive resin.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 3, including the step of forming one color filter layer on the thin film transistor substrate or the counter substrate, and laminating another color filter on the one color filter layer at areas corresponding to associated ones of the areas for forming the cell gap-maintaining columnar layer portions.

6. (New) The method of claim 3 comprising the step of forming a protrusion for controlling orientation of liquid crystal molecules at a substrate where the slit is not provided for both the pixel electrodes of the thin film transistor substrate and the pixel electrodes of the counter substrate.

7. (New) The liquid crystal panel according to claim 2, wherein the hole-filling columnar layer portions fill ones of the recesses other than the predetermined number of the recesses.

8. (New) The liquid crystal panel according to claim 1, wherein there is a protrusion for controlling orientation of liquid crystal molecules at a substrate where the slit is not provided for both the pixel electrodes of the thin film transistor substrate and the pixel electrodes of the counter substrate.